1: Mi Mi Khaing 1-5 (no date) 1946 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

CHAPTER TEN

000 ONE living force had continued at the old house, however, from the time it was built right to the present day. This was my mother's elder sister, our Kyi-Kyi Lon, the same who had thrown herself on the ground at first beholding the muddy fields of Thaton. She had never been to an English school like my mother and indeed had known no other home but the old house all her life. My Kyi-Kyi (aunt-elder-than-parent) is unmarried. The story of how she remained unmarried is stamped with her character.

587 My eldest aunt was married and died after bearing three children,
589 and the bereaved husband came back to Grandfather and asked for the hand of another aunt so that the children should not lack a loving mother's care. This aunt also died, and the hardy widower again returned to Grandfather. Grandfather might have been persuaded to give another daughter in marriage but Kyi-Kyi Lon, who was next on the list, stamped her feet and shooed the widower away, regardless of the belief that a man who survives two wives is outlived by his third. She inherited my grandfather's spirit and vitriolic temper, and a very lively tongue. When she was young she was round and sturdy and was therefore called Ma Lon, Miss Round. With years of spinsterhood, roundness disappeared, the sturdiness developed into a masculine toughness and her natural abilities turned to business management; her feet broadened and she could tramp for miles; with her sharp tongue she could make men quail. It was our Kyi-Kyi who looked after our rubber estates for us. My mother stood in awe of her, and it was a beautiful lesson in gentle humanity to watch the sisters together. My mother had two aspects to her nature. She had an all-round ability equal to Kyi-Kyi Lon's, but there was a gentleness which tempered every masculine ability she possessed. This tempering was always imposed above. In my aunt's presence, the lower stratum automatically disappeared, because Kyi-Kyi, who quarrelled with everyone else, loved my mother like a child who must be scolded and looked after. She therefore devoted her life to our interests.

• 186 My aunt never learnt English, and derided the refined tones of
196 English pronunciation. She never made the slightest concession to any foreign tongue. Surrounded by a world in which products and institutions bore English names, she took delight in pronouncing unavoidable terms with the broadest Burmese accent. "Ine-Si-Et", she would

say for I.C.S., with a marked emphasis on the last word which is pronounced with a glottal stop, and thus pronounced means "cracked". After listening to a conversation in English she would seize on what she heard most often, "You know" and "I know". "*You no, I no, hnit-yauk no, tha-hko ma-la-naing,*" she would say, punning on the word "know", which in Burmese means to wake up. "You wake, I wake, two awake—the thieves cannot come."

Kyi-Kyi lived an independent life; she had inherited a share of the house, among other things, and she lived there on what was due to her from the management of our property. Between her and one servant maid, the old house was kept spotless. A meal was cooked every day for the monastery, and Kyi-Kyi was on very amiable social terms with the monks and the nuns who lived close by. Everyone in Thaton knew her, the young men admired her for her lively wit and the women called her a harridan for it. Between visiting us and business and religious good works and scolding everyone, my Kyi-Kyi spent a busy life.

She was so different from my mother. My mother never smoked or chewed betel, but when Kyi-Kyi came we were treated to watching her roll her cheroots. She had the *hsay*, mixture, in a bowl. It was a compound of chopped tobacco leaves, the stem and pith of the *ohn-nè* (coconut flower), and jaggery or sugar. It was a sticky mixture. The wrapping leaves—the leaves of a tree called the *thanat*—were in a cream cracker biscuit tin. In a small cane sieve-tray she had a number of old *a-si-hkans*, stubs of solid ends, about 1½ to 2 inches long; and on a piece of paper was some boiled rice for sticking. She rolled the mixture in the leaf, tucked the edges of the narrower end neatly in and stuck

Such schools, both for boys and girls, were set up in the big towns, Rangoon, Mandalay, Moulmein, Maymyo, Toungoo, etc. Most of them were mission or religious schools, aided by the government and by the diocese or a religious mission.

Very few Burmans at that time sent daughters to such schools, though sons were sent commonly enough, and the distinctions made against the stray natives who entered the rolls began from the moment of entry. The diocesan schools insisted on our adopting English Christian and surnames, from an aversion to including heathen names on their registers. Burman Buddhist were thus transformed into orthodox Christian names: Sir Htoon Aung Gyaw and his brothers became a family of Thompsons, Sir Paw Tun was happily converted into Potter, and my brother U Sett Kaing, with less relevance, became Robert Downs. Thus many distinguished Burmans spent years under these assumed names. The Roman Catholic schools were kinder. They merely required us to adopt a system of first name and surname, which does not exist among Burmans, and wished us to pick a Christian first name so that the nuns could pronounce it easily. Thus we got Kathleen Maung, Grace Nee, Sarah Tin Gyi, the daughters of U Maung Maung, U Nee and U Tin Gyi. My own name Mi Mi Khaing was brought into line as Mamie Kaing.

We went to a Roman Catholic convent where the nuns made no attacks on Buddhism and no attempts to proselytise us—despite which I became attracted to their religion for a few years—but with sincere conviction and fervour they condemned everything else in us that was different from the great mass of Anglo-Burmans who filled the school. A good proportion of these children were the children of Englishmen who, not having entered into a legal marriage with the Burmese mothers, had now left mother and child with a sum of money which the kind nuns stretched to cover as much schooling as was possible. These and other Anglo-Burman children were encouraged to swank over us with childish cruelty about our darker skins, flat noses, and uncurling hair. They did this to such an extent that many of us in our minority and our helpless misery, branded our distinguished parents as being "half Burmese and half English", in order to gain their good opinion. We were told that Burmese food was stinking, that the use of oil for the hair was dirty and insanitary, and when young sisters ran after their elder ones calling Ma Ma, Elder Sister, all the children hooted with laughter. No wonder that my sister Mya Mya during her first weeks at school would sit by the gate, evening after evening, singing mournfully:

May May yay-ay
La pa taw
Kyi-gan ta-maw maw.

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Oh mother, mother,
When will you come?
The crow is tired with a-cawing.

But conditions improved with time; we grew older and less imaginative, and above all the tide of Burmese nationalist feeling which surged into being in about 1920 was at last beginning to seep through the convent walls.

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Even the nuns heard, in 1930, about Saya San who raised a rebellion in Tharawaddy district, and roused such fervour among a certain section of the population that about 2,000 rebel followers were killed—their bodies vulnerable to gunfire in spite of the charms they had tattooed on—before the Government succeeded in suppressing the rebellion. Although Saya San was a charlatan to those in authority, and his followers a band of unruly dacoits, his conviction that he was born to become the monarch of a newly resurrected Burmese kingdom fired the imagination of some nationalists. To them he was an intrepid spirit, his courage so keen and his body so hardy: *Kya ko Khalok, thitngok hnin hsu ko thinbyu:* The tiger his stubbing stone, tree stumps and bushes of thorns his smoothest mat. By the time the nuns had heard of Saya San I had another Burmese girl as a fellow boarder and class-mate. Grace Nee was a girl of great spirit and mental liveliness. Her father was also an a-so-ya min, and we derived great comfort and happiness from each other's presence. When the class-teacher scolded one of us, saying, "You Burmans nowadays are expecting us to kow-tow to you. Yes, this mad fellow Saya San. And you think that we must bow to you," then the other would bang desk and chair in sympathy and indignation. Our hearts would swell to bursting point, for though we knew little yet about nationalism or patriotism, we identified our country and our race with the persons of our parents, and we could hardly bear this constant humiliation of their name. We shrank from telling them about it, however. My father never knew how different our life at school was from the world at home, and my mother will learn of it for the first time when she reads this.

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What a glorious new world opened out before us when we went to the University. What splendour there was in the richness of Burmese dress, food, companions, religious celebration, music, dancing and wit. I only regret that I could not take full advantage of these years because family troubles tumbled around my ears just then, and when they had subsided I was forced into earnest study to win the best degree possible in order to comfort my mother. This was necessary because up till this time I had always disappointed my parents because I had preferred popularity among companions to concentration on studies. Rangoon

tinkled with every passing breeze. The Shwe Dagon Paya was a beautiful and sacred thing. In the early mornings it gave a radiance to the clear air and the blue sky; in the daylight it shone forth like a blaze of gold, burning and pure; in the evenings it glowed softly as the breeze tinkled its bells, and filled the heart with a gentle sadness which is not grief but a sweet perception of unearthly things; and at night the lights flooded it to stand high and illumined above the dark wooded slopes of the hill. At all times and from all parts of Rangoon it could be seen, calm and sublime, with the same smiling look as is seen on the face of the Buddha, not smiling in the eyes or mouth but in the serene expression of inward calm. 346

As we landed in Rangoon we saw a great gathering of people waiting to meet us. Going abroad for years of study is still a rare enough event to be of interest to all relatives and neighbours, so that the people were assembled not only for an affectionate reunion, but also to observe in what way the stay in England might have corrupted Burmese habits. In the case of a man it is always feared that he may bring back an English wife, and it sometimes happens that a loved child who has been away for five and six years may be greeted with tears and mourning rather than expressions of joy, if he has married an English girl. The tears of mother and sisters are very heartfelt; they express shame at what the neighbours will think, sorrow at the alienation of the man and his children which must inevitably occur, and chagrin at the loss of the rich dowry which might have been procured in the marriage market. 177. 57 813 186. 582

Even when a man does not marry in England, he is strongly scrutinized for undesirable preferences in the matter of marriage arrangements. I remember the night my brother came home. It was his first evening in Burma after nine years of English schooling and University, and it was clear enough that he was neither married nor secretly engaged to an English girl. But my Ma Ma Gyi, my eldest woman cousin who had children as old as we were, subjected him to a searching enquiry. "Set-Set," she said, calling him by his childhood name, "do you think English girls are more attractive than Burmese girls?" My brother who had many English friends but had not noticed any Burmese girls during his few hours in Burma, tried not to answer this question. On being held to it, he said they were different from each other and could not be compared. My cousin said, "But which do *you* like better?" She was getting quite stern by this time, and my mother and we who felt very sorry for my brother were all praying that he would tell a lie, as we held our breath. My brother repeated with much awkwardness that the two were different; so now my cousin took his opinion for granted, and lectured him on the desirability of marrying in an orthodox Burmese manner so that he would prove himself a good son to his mother, a good

177. 57 873 186 582 brother to his young sisters, and thus give joy to the whole family. "For," said she, "our family has always commanded respect. Grandfather was a great man, and you are the only son of the youngest family of his grandchildren, and it should not be said that with us the end tapers to a point;" which is the expression for a stock which degenerates with successive generations,

In the case of a girl, there was not of course, the fear that she would bring back an English husband, but the concern that Burmese standards of morality and dignity would be affected by an unchaperoned stay in a foreign country was very great. As we landed, I remembered enough of my childhood environment to feel the eyes of elder relatives and friends on me while I tried to restrain the wild excitement and love I felt at seeing again my mother and my young sisters now grown so sweet and shy, and I noticed also that my brother had been home long enough not to kiss me in front of my aunts as he had done when he himself had first returned from England. I felt this scrutiny also when my mother took me on the round of obeisance visits during my first days at home, and it formed a complement to the visit which I had paid to each of these elder relatives and friends before I left for England three years before. Then, each had given me a lecture which contained strong injunctions to keep to the path of virtue, modesty and dignity. But these were just *son-ma saga*, admonitory words, to be received with meekness, and not a slight on the strength of my character, just as now, when, satisfied with their scrutiny, they told my mother that her womb should be layered [192] with gold leaf (sacrilegiously using the term for the gilding of sacred objects) for having brought forth such daughters, I was not expected to take conceit.

192 186 In all the houses of friends in Rangoon, in Thaton and Ye, I went through the same ritual, but the words of the hpongyi at Thaton moved me more than any other. "Now I will tell three stories about Mi Mi Khaing," he said, and proceeded in beautiful words and a chanting flow; "You are like a young tree planted of good seed in the fertile earth. Now the tree is heavy with ripe fruit, but the boughs are tender and bend under the weight. The tree must grow carefully and steadily, so that the full fruit do not break the young bough.....Let your stature be measured by your shadow that is cast after the noonday sun, for your knowledge and learning are now at noonday height. So your shadow will grow longer and longer towards the setting of the day.....Let your merit be like a river that gathers more strength from the rain that falls about it, and grows from a stream into a great river before it joins the mighty Thammodhaya." Then he took the monk's expression off his face, and turned to me with a smile and asked in a normal speaking

voice, "Do you understand the hpongyi's language after being so long as it were one human amongst a thousand monkeys?" 192 186

Chastened and fortified by such injunctions, I was ready to plunge into six months of social life before starting on the serious business of earning a living. Rangoon should have offered plenty of scope for that, according to the rhyme about the first three cities of Burma: *"Moul-a-myaing a-sa, Mandalay sa-ga, Yangon a-kywa:* Moulmein for rich eating, Mandalay for fine speaking, Rangoon for showy vanity." 361 177. 36

The Yangon-thu were grouped in urban or verdant clusters about the city of foreigners. There were two packed streets of the more prosperous trading classes in a western quarter of Rangoon, which the municipal authorities called Edward Street and Oliphant Street, but which to every Burman had always been known as *Kon-zay Dan:* Goods Bazaar Row, and *Shwedaung Dan:* Gold Mountain Row. Here the families lived in tightly packed unpretentious houses and did not possess Western style furniture or cars; they went to the cinema in rickshaws, but the women were loaded with valuable diamond jewellery which put many a minkadaw to shame. In the dusk of the evenings, they sat on wooden platform couches on the pavement outside each house, puffing at cheroots, calling out to neighbours and eating a variety of choice foods from the Burmese, Chinese and Indian restaurant quarter which surrounded them. In the east of the town, separated from this area by rows of Indian and mixed streets, retired Government officers were concentrated in a block. Here the houses were substantial, the sons and daughters attended school and University in cars, and the most eligible civil servants could be obtained in marriage for daughters, but the pensioners were the type who lived in a congested neighbourhood for fear of dacoits in a more open area, and whose womenfolk considered lawns and the drawing-rooms of modern bungalows a poor substitute for the access to cinema, eating houses and bazaars that a crowded part of Rangoon afforded them. Round about the Kokine Lakes and along the main highway to Prome, however, more newly retired Burmans who entertained on chairs, laid rugs on floors and hung pictures on walls in the Western fashion, had built pleasant modern bungalows. To the west of this area, just a stone's throw from the main Prome Road, began the village of Kemmendine with its rows of small wooden houses, each with its front enclosure full of green foliage, an altar-stand jutting out on the east wall, three steps raising the first and only storey a few feet off the ground, and wooden floors with one plank loose in them to allow the dust to be swept below. Kemmendine had its own bazaar, country boats on the river, and children and dogs playing on the street, just like any district town. My *Ko Gyi*, eldest male first cousin, lived there among small traders, clerks and school

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All the ill deeds 872
he does will swell the sum of his demerits, but not a single 779
good action, no uttermost act of charity or devotion, will be 792
recorded to his advantage for another existence. Without 775
admission to the order, without "Buddhist baptism," no man 186
can count his present existence as other than an animal's. The great gift of having appeared in the likeness of a human being; the happy balancing of merits and demerits which has resulted in so glorious an opportunity of advancing towards Ne'-ban; the still greater fortune of existence in a country where the tenets of Buddhism offer supreme chances to the weary seeker after rest from the moil of a work-a-day world; all will have been recklessly thrown away. It is written that more hardly will a needle cast from the summit of Mount Myinmo across the wide Thamoddaya Sea, more hardly will it touch with its point as it falls another needle standing point upwards in the great Southern Island, than will any given creature become a human being. How are the Western foreigners, black and white, to be pitied, who have indeed by earnest strivings attained the seat of man, but, arrived there, find it all naught because they do not hear the teachings of the Buddha! How much worse the Burman, to whom all his life long the monastery door stands open, to whom a week's, a day's, an hour's sojourn would offer boundless possibilities, and yet who enters not in. If this be so, what then can be the prospect for the boy who having put his hand to the plough turns back, who entering the monastery as a child, imbibes the religious thoughts and becomes acquainted with the religious creed, and yet fails to seek the "humanity" so easily to be gained? Better have been born an animal or an Englishman, and scoffed at what he did not understand.

Consequently it may be invariably assumed that the 871
little scholar, as soon as age and acquirements admit, puts 792
on the yellow garb as a finish to his education. This used 177.87
to include every one. Till the English came and took the country, everybody went to the Pon-gyi-Kyaung. But now there are English government schools; there are Burmese laymen's schools, which neglect religious education altogether, and look to competitive examinations as the end and aim of juvenile existence, as the ne'-ban of school life.

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
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tribute must be as gratifying as the loudest stamping of feet and whistling on fingers of a London theatre. In fact a Burman might perhaps be justified in doubting the enthusiasm and admiration which finds vent in whistling.

The acting as a whole cannot be said to be satisfactory. The circumstances are against it. Who could "lose himself in his part" in the centre of a crowd of people all smoking and often talking? Moreover the subjects treated are so romantic and remote from ordinary worldly events that no one can be expected to realise them. Finally, who could keep it up for ten hours at a stretch? Nevertheless, individual passages are occasionally wonderfully well done. The piteous wailings and desolation of the princess; the majesty of the king; the grim savagery of the demon, are often very effectively delineated, while the clowns are almost invariably exceedingly clever. They are chosen for their ready wit, many of the jokes being extempore, as well as for their power of facial contortion. Caricatures of the performances of the other actors and comic songs form their chief stock-in-trade, and the text of the play is very far from being adhered to. It is an undoubted fact, if scarcely complimentary, that the clown has much more to do in the play and is very much broader in his jokes when Englishmen are present than when there is a purely national audience. The prolongation of the comic parts is due to a courteous desire to please the visitors, buffooneries being much more readily understood than high dramatic art, while the coarseness is unfortunately due to the same impression which makes a Burman always produce brandy and beer for the refreshment of a white man, the idea namely that that is what he likes best. None of the higher class troupes, more especially those from Upper Burma, will, however, condescend to this sort of thing.

The company formerly was always made up in Mandalay, or said it was. There are other troupes, but it is usually taken for granted that they cannot be better than second-rate. The delta Burman is firmly persuaded that "far birds have fair feathers." In their humble phraseology they say, "In the Low Country we are not up in the humanities." This is not exactly complimentary to longer

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
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his colour was a mixture of light-brown and dingy, smoke-smirched cream colour. The eye, when you know it, is perhaps the best rough test for an amateur. The iris ought to be yellow, with a reddish outer annulus. The effect of this is decisive to the connoisseur, if only sinister to the outsider. But the red ring represents the circle of the nine precious gems. In other respects the Sinbyudaw was not attractive in appearance; he was very big, but, notwithstanding the care taken of him, was remarkably lean and hollow-sided. His tusks, however, were magnificent—white, smooth, and curving forward in front of his trunk so that they almost met. In his young days he was suckled by women, who stood in a long row outside his palace, and the honour was eagerly sought after, for the creature was a national pride and not merely a royal monopoly. A hundred soldiers guarded his palace, and the Sovereign of the Golden Throne himself made offerings and paid him reverence. An establishment of thirty men waited on him, and among them was a Minister of State, who managed his affairs and looked after the revenues of the province that was assigned to him to "eat." His palace stood within the inner stockade and was decorated with the royal pya-that. Every day he was bathed with scented sandal water, and all his vessels and utensils were made of gold. Troupes of the palace *coryphées* danced for his pleasure, and there were choruses of sweet-voiced singers to lull him to sleep.

Nevertheless his lordship was very bad-tempered, and his attendants were much afraid of him. Such things are, however, not unknown with human kings. On one occasion the Sinbyudaw killed a man who had ventured too near, and there was a good deal of trouble and noise before the body could be got away from him. The king—Thibaw's father—heard the commotion, and inquired what was the matter. When he was told, he expressed great concern and not a little alarm for the future state of the Lord White Elephant, with the red stain of murder on him, blotting out hosts of previous good deeds. But the elephant's minister calmed his mind and restored him to equanimity by saying, "Pray do not be disturbed, payā; lu ma hôk bu kalā—it was not a man only a foreigner."

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had no drill, but this was very far from being the case. On the contrary, drill was going on constantly inside the palace and at the various guard stations. The French and Italian officers were always instructing them, but a want of belief in the utility of mass movements rendered all their efforts useless. The recruits went through the balance-step with the utmost enthusiasm; when it came to forming fours they were a little less ardent, but by the time they ought to have been counter-marching and right-forming company they were tired of the whole business and poked fun at the instructor. European officers called themselves, and were called, generals and colonels and what not, but they were simply drill sergeants with very unpromising material. They were allowed no uniform; they never took command on a review day. Occasionally they complained of being insulted by their squads, and were told by a sententious mingyi that patience is one of the ten virtues which go to the making up of a true gentleman. To recompense them for their trials they made a great deal of money in a variety of ways, their salaries being the least part, and paid at long and uncertain intervals in a lump sum. The real "generals" were men who hardly ever came out at all, least of all when there was a chance of fighting. The commander-in-chief was for many months in jail, but still retained his title, and two of his sons remained in command of regiments. The men who managed the reviews and any work that was to be done were all let-thôndaw, the king's pages of honour. Few of them were over twenty, but their duties did not require much experience.

Besides the legitimate drill, conducted by the European instructors, there were other performances, the object of which would hardly be apparent to the compilers of the *Manual of Field Exercise*. The instructor, one of the junior officers, assembled the men in a big circle round about him, and proceeded in a fashion dictated to him apparently by nothing but his own fancy. He threw his gun into the air, caught it and cried *hé!* and the men followed his example to the best of their ability. He went through the same manœuvre behind his back, cried *hé!* again, and the men probably got some hard knocks in dutifully trying to imitate him. He cried *hé* and hunched up his shoulders; cried *hé* and brought

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coats and waistcloths as "things to be worn"; and so forth in infinite variety. Even the numeral auxiliaries applied to human beings vary. The Buddha, as well as superior beings and pagodas, is spoken of as a ta-zu; kings, members of the Sacred Order, and persons in power generally, are referred to as ta-ba; respectable people to whom it is wished to be polite are numbered as ta-u (so many "foreheads"); and in ordinary conversation, mankind generally are denominated ta-yauk. Foreigners—regarded as aliens and indeed not entitled to rank as human beings at all, since they have never worn the yellow robe—receive but scant reverence from the tongues of the older people, and formerly from Upper Burmans, the same auxiliary being applied to them as would be used in speaking of a buffalo or a pig. Thus you would say kalā hni'-gaung, foreigners, two animals, or "two beastly foreigners." This has, however, now almost died out, certainly in regard to Europeans, and is only occasionally heard with reference to some of the least civilised of the hill tribes. A hint of the same style of enumeration occurs in the English "twenty head of cattle," and perhaps in the military "five hundred sabres," or "two thousand bayonets," where the weapon is more typical and perhaps of greater value than the man who wields it.

Chinese and Shan perhaps exceed the Burman language in the number of almost identically sounding syllables, in which the slightest difference of intonation makes a change of sense, but most people are of opinion that it is quite rich enough. Thus pe in its simple form may mean (1) the palmyra palm or leaf, whence pe-sa, a palm-leaf book; (2) an anvil; (3) to have the edge or point turned; (4) to lay the ears back, as a horse; (5) to be dull of sight, or blunted in feelings; (6) to be dirty; (7) an euphonic verbal affix.

Pe, with the heavy accent (denoting a lengthening of the sound) means to give, and pe-sa in this form, to give in marriage.

Hpe, with the heavy accent (practically the same sound to an Englishman's ears) means (1) to scab over; (2) to ward off evil; (3) to tack off shore with a boat in order to gain an offing; (4) to be broken down in bodily strength or ability.

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A woman who has seven sons or seven daughters in unbroken succession is almost certain to become a witch; her husband had better not quarrel with her at any rate.

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At Kāma, a small place between Prome and Thayetmyo, there is a spirit flame, a kind of Jack o' Lantern, in a hollow near the town. Long ago a smith was killed in a brawl and became a nat after death. He liked his old profession and set up a nat-fire, and worked away at nights on a spectral forge. The inhabitants soon found out what was going on, and after their first terror was over used to go out in the middle of the day and leave a piece of iron, saying, "Good Mr. Spirit, make me an axe, a dah, a hoe." Next day they found it all ready made. At last a Chin—just the sort of thing one of those stupid people would do—hid himself, and just when the midnight cocks had finished crowing, up rose the smith in human shape, dressed in a red paso and a flaring red turban. He began hammering away on his anvil, welding a sword. The infatuated Chin at last shouted, "Make it quick." The demon smith whipped round on the instant and flung the red-hot dah at him, burning his cheek. The indiscreet peeping Tom took to his heels and ran. After he had got a mile away he rubbed his blistered cheek, and in after-times there rose at that place Pāpôt, "the cheek-rubbing village." A mile farther on he began to shake all over with fatigue and terror, whence the name of Tôn, "the trembling village." Finally, when he reached the site of Paukpogu, the "swelling burst," he sank down on the ground, and was found there next morning with just enough life left to tell his story. The smith never worked again, but his fire may be seen to this day. Once a year all the house fires in Kāma are put out and lighted again from the nat-mi. Should any one neglect so to pay hônour to the nat, his house and all his goods will be burnt before the year is out. The resemblance to the legend of Wayland Smith at Lambourn in Berkshire is obvious. The naming of the villages is also a favourite form of Horne Took etymology prevalent all over Burma.

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The common notion of earthquakes is that the earth is supported on the shoulders of four creatures called nga-hlyin. These monsters are less sturdy than the classical Atlas, and

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the fence. Monasteries are places of meditation and peace.

Of course, all monasteries are not great and beautiful buildings; many are but huts of bamboo and straw, but little better than the villager's hut. Some villages are so poor that they can afford but little for their holy men. But always there will be trees, always the ground will be swept, always the place will be respected just the same. And as soon as a good crop gives the village a little money, it will build a teak monastery, be sure of that.

Monasteries are free to all. Any stranger may walk into a monastery and receive shelter. The monks are always hospitable. I have myself lived, perhaps, a quarter of my life in Burma in monasteries, or in the rest-houses attached to them. We break all their laws: we ride and wear boots within the sacred enclosure; our servants kill fowls for our dinners there, where all life is protected; we treat these monks, these who are the honoured of the nation, much in the offhand, unceremonious way that we treat all Orientals; we often openly laugh at their religion. And yet they always receive us; they are often even glad to see us and talk to us. Very, very seldom do you meet with any return in kind for your contempt of their faith and habits. I have heard it said sometimes that some monks stand aloof, that they like to keep to themselves. If they should do so, can you wonder? Would any people, not firmly bound by their religion, put up with it all for a moment? If you went into a Mahommedan mosque in Delhi with your boots on, you would probably be killed. Yet

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we clump round the Shwe Dagon pagoda at our ease, and no one interferes. Do not suppose that it is because the Burman believes less than the Hindu or Mahommedan. It is because he believes more, because he is taught that submission and patience are strong Buddhist virtues, and that a man's conduct is an affair of his own soul. He is willing to believe that the Englishman's breaches of decorum are due to foreign manners, to the necessities of our life, to ignorance. But even if he supposed that we did these things out of sheer wantonness, it would make no difference. If the foreigner is dead to every feeling of respect, of courtesy, of sympathy, that is an affair of the foreigner's own heart. It is not for the monk to enforce upon strangers the respect and reverence due to purity, to courage, to the better things. Each man is responsible for himself, the foreigner no less than the Burman. If a foreigner have no respect for what is good, that is his own business. It can hurt no one but himself if he is blatant, ignorant, contemptuous. No one is insulted by it, or requires revenge for it. You might as well try and insult gravity by jeering at Newton and his pupils, as injure the laws of righteousness by jeering at the Buddha or his monks. And so you will see foreigners take all sorts of liberties in monasteries and pagodas, break every rule wantonly, and disregard everything the Buddhist holds holy, and yet very little notice will be taken openly. Burmans will have their own opinion of you, do have their own opinion of you, without a doubt; but because you are lost to all sense of decency,

16:Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

792 574 186 that is no reason why the Buddhist monk or layman should also lower himself by getting angry and resent it; and so you may walk into any monastery or rest-house and act as you think fit, and no one will interfere with you. Nay, if you even show a little courtesy to the monks, your hosts, they will be glad to talk to you and tell you of their lives and their desires. It is very seldom that a pleasant word or a jest will not bring the monks into forgetting all your offences, and talking to you freely and openly. I have had, I have still, many friends among the monkhood; I have been beholden to them for many kindnesses; I have found them always, peasants as they are, courteous and well-mannered. Nay, there are greater things than these.

792 779 When my dear friend was murdered at the outbreak of the war, wantonly murdered by the soldiers of a brutal official, and his body drifted down the river, everyone afraid to bury it, for fear of the wrath of government, was it not at last tenderly and lovingly buried by the monks near whose monastery it floated ashore? Would all people have done this? Remember, he was one of those whose army was engaged in subduing the kingdom; whose army imprisoned the king, and had killed, and were killing, many, many hundreds of Burmans. 'We do not remember such things. All men are brothers to the dead.' They are brothers to the living, too. Is there not a great monastery near Kindat, built by an Englishman as a memorial to the monk who saved his life at peril of his own at that same time, who preserved him till help came?

16:Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

great arm will seize you, and you will be pulled under and disappear for ever.

A Nat is much like a human being; if you treat him well he will treat you well, and conversely. Courtesy is never wasted on men or Nats, at least so a Burman tells me.

The highest Nats live in the mountains. The higher the Nat the higher the mountain; and when you get to a very high peak indeed, like Mainthong Peak in Wuntho, you encounter very powerful Nats.

They tell a story of Mainthong Peak and the Nats there, how all of a sudden, one day in 1885, strange noises came from the hill. High up on his mighty side was heard the sound of great guns firing slowly and continuously; there was the thunder of falling rocks, cries as of someone bewailing a terrible calamity, and voices calling from the precipices. The people living in their little hamlets about his feet were terrified. Something they knew had happened of most dire import to them, some catastrophe which they were powerless to prevent, which they could not even guess. But when a few weeks later there came even into those remote villages the news of the fall of Mandalay, of the surrender of the king, of the 'great treachery,' they knew that this was what the Nats had been sorrowing over. All the Nats everywhere seem to have been distressed at our arrival, to hate our presence, and to earnestly desire our absence. They are the spirits of the country and of the people, and they cannot abide a foreign domination.

But the greatest place for Nats is the Popa Mountain, which is an extinct volcano standing all

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recognised as over-stimulated by anxieties. "Don't talk my gall into disorder" is a common reaction to calamity tales.

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The weather is important is maintaining health. Changeable weather as during the late part of the Monsoon season is generally unhealthy and gives rise to pulmonary disorders. One should provide head protection (through covering or shade from umbrella) from the sun's rays - which cause headaches by melting the brain. Colds come from getting wet in the rain resulting from the lack of sufficient bodily heat. MIEH HMOME (earth-vapour) which rises as a steam in the early morning or after sudden rains is unhealthful in causing sore eyes and other inflamations. The"steam of the body" healthfully goes out in ordinary bathing and adds to one's comfort. Heat is a key factor in health and sickness being readily discerned as causes of local or general infection. The additional concept of "like producing like" helps explain the above beliefs.

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The odor of AH HNYAW (fried food) is especially dangerous to babies and persons in a weakened condition. When frying, which will create extensive fumes, is to be undertaken the cook must give warning to the neighbourhood so that susceptible ones can be protected. Such persons take refuge behind the thick, cloth mosquito nets. Many heated arguments take place in our servants' quarters when the Indian fried food fumes carry over to the Burmese apartments. It is observed that this danger applies peculiarly to the Burmese - Chinese are also exempt since they are seen to cook with babies strapped on their backs.

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Parts of the body are cared for with special ingredients. The eyes are cleaned with pure water or coconut water. Oil is frequently dropped into the ears through a feather quill. The mouth and teeth are cleaned with salt. Bitter foods keep keep the stomach fit.

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Babies up to 1 year are fed on mother's milk or cow's milk. After one, rice chewed by the mother "to make it digestible" is added with some dried fish. After two, the child can chew its own rice, have a little meat, but no hot condiments. After five the child eats the same foods as the adults but is not allowed sour foods as this will "lessen the weight". After 16 or 17, this restriction is

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302 on top of the head. Scented hair oil is used by both sexes on
177 special occasions.
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The HTAMEIN is regarded as "unworthy" for a man to touch. A
291 severe insult is for a wife to request her husband to bring her
562 HTAMEIN or to wash it. Drying HTAMEINS in the front of the house is
183 never allowed; and it is strictly forbidden for this garment to touch any pongyi utensils. Parents instruct their boys never to pass under the strings of a line of which HTAMEINS are drying as such is thought to take away the masculine powers, and render the tattooed charms ineffective. Men and women's clothes are washed and stored separately.

[593] When a son neglects his mother after marriage she will complain with rage that he has not come out of the HTAMEIN and is under the HTAMEIN government of his wife.

291 Women usually wear solid black HTAMEINS during menstruation.
841 Boys, in jest, inform one of their companions that he may now become serious when the girl of his choice appears in a black dress for the first time.

Slippers of both sexes are regarded as "dirty" objects and are left outside of the houses. They are strictly prohibited in pagoda enclosures and land. When a girl is angry at a teasing boy (or quarreling with a woman) she will threaten to slap his face with her sandal. This is a double insult since the head is regarded as a particularly sacred part of the body. Barbers must ask permission and apologise for touching the heads of their customers.

291 Western clothing has a higher status than Burmese clothing in
177 certain situations and on certain occasions especially where western
554 people are present in suits. However, for most occasions, everyday or special, the Burmese costume is preferred. When abroad the Burmese men usually wear western garb. The wearer of western clothes

● [186] is often open to the taunt that he is "Bo Gyi (term for Englishmen) made in Burma". There is a strong feeling in all cases to be "properly" dressed and not to stand out from the rest of the group. This tendency is stronger in men than women who with their jewels and fine silks attempt to rival each other in a contest for social position.

[562] Burmese girl students who go abroad almost invariably wear their native costumes.

the bereaved bring with them gifts of money and in this way seek to help them to defray the funeral expenses of which the funeral feast held 7 days after the death is most expensive. Sometimes these visitors are so generous that the householder does not need to contribute anything at all. Some people, however, prefer to reserve the right to pay for burial expenses of someone in the family, and put out an announcement requesting neighbours to refrain from making monetary contributions. 764 621 476

The community activities in the refugee camp are mainly of an economic nature - discussed in the section on "Work". The solidarity of the village is lacking and the feelings of obligation and responsibility beyond the basic economic ones are absent. 621 722

In Pathne there are ethnic groups other than the Burmese. There are a few Karens, Indians of Madrasi affiliation, as well as a few Chinese who run stores. The attitude of the family toward these other groups are reflected in the following interview: (Note: the concept of "religion" is used here as meaning "general way of life." 621 563 186

Q. "Does U Pyaing know about other religions such as Christianity and Hinduism? If so, what is his attitude towards them.

A. "I don't understand them well. We are with our own religion. We are country folk. We understand our religion only. We don't understand other religions.

Q. "What is your attitude towards other racial groups living in the village?

A. "I don't hold any positive attitude. I harbour no evil thoughts. We hold them to be the same as we are.

Q. "Would you like to go back to live among the Karens you spoke of just now?

A. (D.A.Z.) "Of course not. Lots of Burmese were left behind. We wouldn't dare to live among the Karens."
(U.M.) "Some people do not dare to live among the Karens, but we do."
(D.A.Z.) U.M.)"We don't have enemies."
(D.A.Z.) "There are Karens who are friendly with us."
(U.M.) "Say that we lived together. We lived together."
(D.A.Z.)"Though we have no enemies we feel afraid. In the present turmoil and confusion people no longer know each other."

Q. " Do the Karens differ from you in religion?"

A. (U.M.) "Our religions do not differ. The religion of Karens in our place and our religion do not differ. It is Buddhism."

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Q. "We want to know your relations with adherents of other religions. There are people who worship Indian gods, Chinese gods, and Christians - what is your attitude towards them?"

A. (U.M.) "I don't hold any attitude at all."

Q. " Do you get on well?"

A. (U.M.) "Yes. We get on very well. They buy our goods and we buy theirs. They rent our fields and cultivate them. If there are cows they are borrowed and lent. We live together like this - buying and selling."

Q. "This is about the people. How about their attitude towards their gods?"

A. "I have no attitude."

Q. "Have you never thought about it?"

A. "I have never thought about it. Their god is only slightly different. There is only one god. There will be only one god. Only people differ somewhat. Our outlook should be improved. After all, his god is my god and my god is his god. Only the races differ. Even one race is divided within itself."

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The relationship of the family to the state in Pathwe involve taxes, military service and voting. In the pre-war days, U Myaing and family had to pay a capitation tax, levied at the rate of Rs. 5/- per year for a married couple, and Rs. 2/8 per year for a bachelor of twenty and over. Children and unmarried women and widows are exempt from any tax whatsoever. There was a land tax on cultivation fields - levied at the rate of annas 2 per acre per annum, and also on garden land at one anna or two annas per acre per annum according to the value of the land. The tax on INS - or purchase of the fishery rights amounted to a figure anywhere between Rs. 3000/- and Rs. 12,000/-. U Myaing is not liable to taxes because of his low income, he retains his voting privileges for general elections.

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The family was moved from Pathwe to the refugee camp because of the insurrection and has been under the protection of the government since coming to camp. The proportion of food and shelter benefits, which they receive from the government, has been noted under those headings. According to government policy, shelter is provided for the family, and food for all except one adult who is expected to work.

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Education for U Myaing's children is provided by the government both in Pantanaw and in the refugee camp. Only the cost of the books has to be paid by him.

Children in the Pathwe village learnt their lessons at the government school. This school, which was on YWA-GYI-BET side, teaches pupils up to the tenth standard. The school house was built by contributions taken in the village. When U Myaing was young, they had to pay a tuition fee of four annas each to the schoolmaster every month. Now government has taken over the cost of educating the children, and fees are no longer required of them. The children only have to bring their own books and pencils. There are three teachers in the school; one headmaster and two assistants. The headmaster draws a salary of Rs. 100/- and the assistants of over Rs. 90/- each. There are other schools across the river but they teach only up till the fourth standard, and children of higher grades have to come to YWA-GYI-BET to attend school.

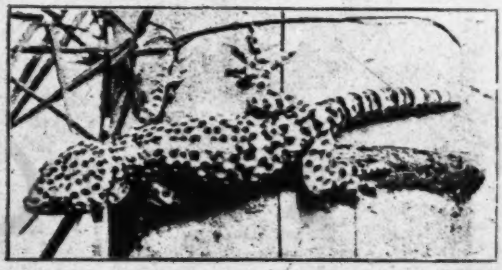
25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

171. THE VILLAGE DOGS.

the kinked tail. Wild animals are often kept as pets, and fetch good prices. Monkeys, deer, porcupines, otters, are occasionally tamed. Cage-birds are in many houses (No. 404); doves, minas, and parakeets are the commonest. The principal singing bird is the bulbul, but it is not a cage-bird. Poultry is kept for the sake of fighting-cocks or for fancy. The wild peacock is caught young and kept; it is generally a savage bird. The peacock and the hare are the national emblems of Burma (Nos. 2, 7, 11).

The houses and boats are infested with rats and cockroaches. The latter have an enemy in the *taukté*, a large lizard of the same tribe as the little gecko, which catches flies in the houses throughout the tropics of Asia. This animal is remarkable for its loud cry, whence its name (see *The Shadow of the Pagoda*). What with the cawing of crows, barking of dogs, croaking of frogs, chatter of sparrows, loud hum of cicadas, squeaking of rats—an interval of real stillness by day or night is a boon in Burma, when the quiet does not merely serve to bring out the ominous "ping" of the mosquito. In addition to this perennial pest come the flights of insects at dusk, as the rainy season approaches. The "bombardier" comes with them, a beetle which raises a blister wherever it touches, and which is a danger to eyesight. But one of the most charming effects of the country is produced by the myriads of fireflies with their rhythmical illumination of the river sedges at night.

The seasons of Burma—and Further India at large—are three; the rainy, or south-west monsoon, the cool, or north-east monsoon, and the hot season. The rains last, roughly speaking, from May to September (*Kasòn, Nayòn, Wazò, Wagàung, Tawthalìn,*



172. THE TAUK-TÉ (ONE-THIRD NATURAL SIZE).

25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 APl Burma
Burmese AP4

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217. PLASTERER'S SCAFFOLD ON ZEDI.

(*Kathé*) excel in this work and form colonies for the industry. Attempts have been made in Europe to imitate the scroll-patterns on the Jacquard loom, as well as to print them. But the imitations fall too far short of the original, which is nearly the same front and back. The best *lun-tayâ* silks cost ten to fifteen rupees the square foot, which makes two hundred to three hundred rupees for the *pasô*. Only an inch or two a day can be woven. Italian methods of carding, dyeing, and finishing silk, were introduced by the late King, Mindôn Min, and have helped to develop an important industry in Mandalay. Stripe and tartan patterns are woven in this way, chiefly from China silk. Fine texture and delicate tints are aimed at, rather than rich colour and design. The *pasô* of

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twenty cubits, one cubit wide, costs ten to twenty rupees.

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The Burman umbrella (*tî*) is on the Chinese model—a bamboo frame with paper cover. The Chinese umbrella has a thin paper cover, the Burman has

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bast-paper, which outlasts several of the other. But the Chinese umbrellas are cheaper, better waterproofed, and sun-proof. The Burman *tî* is waterproofed by occasional oiling with crude petroleum. A waterproof size made from the fruit of the *hpê* is used for fixing the paper to the ribs and the cotton twines that connect them. The red, the gilt and the white umbrellas

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are emblems of state. The

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first two denote official rank, according to the number assigned. Such umbrellas

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have stems of turned wood, six to eight feet long, to allow of the *tî* being borne over the officer on horseback or in his chariot, by attendants on foot (No. 375). The

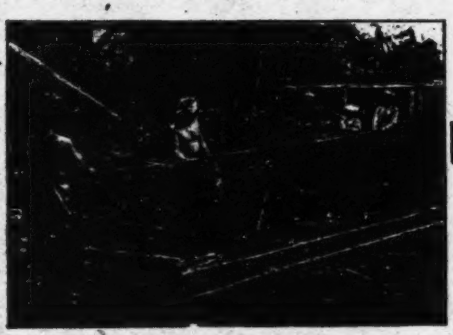
218. SCULPTURING MARBLE IMAGES.

25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 APl Burma
Burmese AP4

218. ROPE-WALK.

inner side is brightly decorated with floss silks. Gilt umbrellas (*shwe-dî*) are dedicated in the *kyaung*, but are not actually used. The white umbrella (*thhyu*) is the emblem of sovereignty. The *thhyu* is set above the images of the Buddha and above the remains of the *yahán*, who are assumed at their death to enter upon a higher spiritual stage. The metal canopy surmounting the *sadi* is a conventionalised *tî* (No. 232). Of late, European umbrellas have become a staple import of Burma.

Lacquer-ware vessels and utensils—light, durable, and watertight—are made with the help of *thissi*, the exudation of the bark of *Melanorrhœa usitatissima*, a common tree of the *in* forest. The gum blackens to jet on exposure to the air. It dries slower than the "Japan black" of commerce, but is much tougher; it sells for two to three rupees a viss. *Thissi* is applied to wood turnery and bamboo wickerwork, either plain or with pigments, generally with vermilion. The commonest lacquer goods are platters (*byat* and *daunglan*), which are turned of teak or *yamané* wood and given two or three coats of *thissi*. After the platters, the principal article of lacquer-ware is the betel-box (*kun-it*). Coarse lacquering is done everywhere in the dry region, but the betel-box industry is peculiar to Pagán. The advantage of lacquer-ware and of a deep cover for the betel-box, is to keep the green leaf fresh At first sight it appears incredible that these exact cylindrical boxes with their trays and covers, fitting as if each piece had been turned out of the block, should start from a wicker-work frame. Yet so it is; the models are plaited so true that the rest



219. HILL-PEOPLE TWISTING ROPE.